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PUBLIC HEALTH REPORTS.

UNITED STATES.

[Reports to the Surgeon-General, Public Health and Marine-Hospital Service.]

Colored Anti-Tuberculosis League—Proposed plan of organization.

On request of the president of the Georgia State College for Colored Youth, Surg. C. P. Wertenbaker was directed by the bureau to lecture before a negro farmers' conference at Savannah, Ga., while on detail to inspect the Quarantine Station at that port. Doctor Wertenbaker reports, March 20:

February 25, I gave an illustrated lecture on tuberculosis at the State Industrial College before an audience that crowded the hall to its capacity, with standing room only.

The audience were all negroes, and consisted of the faculty and students of the college, ministers, physicians, and other prominent negroes from Savannah and adjacent places, and several hundred negro farmers from different parts of the State.

At the close of the lecture I made the suggestion that there be organized at that time a State Anti-Tuberculosis League for Negroes. Such an organization was at once formed, with Prof. R. R. Wright, president of the college, as president, and Dr. S. P. Lloyd of Savannah, Ga., as secretary.

A committee was appointed by the president to select the suitable vice-presidents for each county in the State, and it is proposed that the vice-president proceed to organize a branch of the State league in each negro church in his county.

The plan of organization that I suggested, and that was adopted by the state league, is as follows:

That the vice-president for each county call together leading negro ministers, physicians, teachers, etc., in his county, or in different sections of the county, and induce them to start a branch of the state league in each negro church in the said county.

It is proposed that any colored person may become a member of one of these branch leagues by the payment of annual dues, and shall receive a certificate of membership. This certificate shall be attractively designed, and shall contain, in addition to the certificate of membership, necessary information relative to the cause, prevention, and cure of tuberculosis, and the measures necessary to prevent its spread, as well as other valuable sanitary instructions.

It is furthermore proposed that each member of the league wear a button bearing the words "Colored Anti-Tuberculosis League," which surrounds a double red cross.

It is intended that the fund formed by the annual dues paid by the members into each church league shall be used for the care and treatment of such members of that league as may have tuberculosis, and

for disseminating information for combating the spread of the disease by publications, lectures, establishment of dispensaries and sanatoria, etc.

I have been informed since my return from Georgia that the state league has completed its organization and is now actively engaged in organizing church leagues throughout the State, and that quite a number have been formed. In Savannah the negro ministers' association and the negro physicians have indorsed the movement, and the work of organization is being carried on with enthusiasm in a number of counties.

ADVANTAGES OF THE PLAN PROPOSED.

1. It is well known that tuberculosis is very prevalent among the negroes. Nearly four times as many of them die of the disease as white people. This plan reaches the negro in the most effective way, viz, through his church organization. The church is an organization in which the negro is always interested, and with which a majority of the race are connected.

It meets his religious and his social needs and is his club as well as his church. The minister is usually the best educated and most intelligent man in the church, and his influence with his congregation is great.

By taking advantage of the church organization the negro is reached in the most practical way, and the work of eradicating tuberculosis among its members enlists the cooperation of its most intelligent men, and those having the greatest influence with the negroes.

2. The plan of having a vice-president for each county, whose duty it is to organize a branch league in each negro church in the county, gives a convenient and useful means of subdividing the work and insures greater activity in it, in addition to enlisting a larger number in the work than in any other way.

3. The organization into church leagues enables the minister, who knows the life and circumstances of his members better than anyone else can know them, to render aid in the most effective way to those who have the disease, and teach his people those principles of sanitation that are necessary to preserve their health.

4. As the members of the league who have tuberculosis will receive help from the league, it is believed that all, or nearly all who have the disease, will make the fact known to the officers of the league in order to receive this help. As the by-laws of these leagues contemplate a cooperation on the part of the league with health officials and organizations interested in the prevention and cure of tuberculosis, the number and location of cases will be obtained that could not be had in any other way. In this way valuable statistics can be compiled and health officers enabled to take the necessary measures to prevent the spread of the disease.

5. The feature of printing sanitary information on the certificate of membership insures the reading of that information and its preservation where it can be frequently seen.

6. In addition to the advantages enumerated above, this plan provides means whereby the negro contributes to the care of the consumptives of his race, which at present he does not do to any great extent.

7. As the payment of the small annual dues will give each member of the league the assurance of help in case he contracts tuberculosis, the payment of these dues will doubtless be regarded as a sort of insurance, and it is expected that it will prove a powerful incentive to join the league.

8. It is contemplated that the movement will extend to other States. It is the most comprehensive health movement of its kind that has ever been proposed, and it seems to promise great success. Aside from its educational features in regard to tuberculosis, the instruction in general sanitation and the agitation of the subject must of necessity produce beneficial results, and an improvement in the conditions under which the negro lives.

9. Any improvement in the health conditions among the negroes will also be beneficial to the white race. In the South, where the negroes are chiefly employed as cooks, nurses, house servants, etc., they are brought into intimate contact with the whites, and infection among the negro servants is liable to be communicated to the whites.

Proposed constitution and by-laws.

Form of constitution and by-laws suitable for state colored anti-tuberculosis leagues:

CONSTITUTION (STATE LEAGUE).

ARTICLE I. The name of this organization shall be the Colored Anti-Tuberculosis League of
(Name of State.)

ART. II. The objects of this league are to combat the spread of tuberculosis among the colored race, to better the condition of those who suffer from the disease, and to promote their recovery—

By the establishment of branch leagues in every colored church in the State.

By disseminating information (a) to those who may come in contact with the disease as to the prevention of its spread; (b) to those suffering from the disease as to the best treatment and means of help to promote their recovery; (c) to the public generally.

By teaching the colored race, and especially the children of that race, the principles of sanitation and their application to daily life.

By cooperating with the public health authorities and other organizations in measures adopted for the prevention and cure of the disease.

By the establishment of dispensaries and sanatoria for the treatment of colored consumptives, and also to secure better care of consumptives in their homes.

To promote the physical and moral improvement of the colored race.

ART. III. The meetings of this league shall be held at such times and places as may be directed by the by-laws.

BY-LAWS (STATE LEAGUE).

ARTICLE I.

Any colored person who shall pay \$1 or more into the treasury of the State League or any of its branches may be enrolled as an active member for twelve months from the date of such payment.

SEC. 2. Any colored person who shall pay \$25 into the treasury of the State League or any of its branches may be enrolled as a life member.

ARTICLE II.

The officers of this league shall be a president, one vice-president for each county in the State, a secretary, and a treasurer, who shall perform the usual duties of their respective offices.

SEC. 2. In addition to the usual duties of his office, each vice-president shall organize a branch of the State League in each colored church in his county.

SEC. 3. In the absence of the president the senior vice-president present shall perform the duties of the president.

SEC. 4. There shall be an executive board consisting of the president and secretary, ex officio, and three other members. The duties of this board are administrative.

ARTICLE III.

The regular officers and members of the executive board shall be elected by ballot at the annual meeting of the league.

SEC. 2. All committees shall be appointed by the executive board and all vacancies shall be filled by the executive board.

ARTICLE IV.

The executive board shall appoint such committees as it may consider necessary for properly carrying on the work of the league.

ARTICLE V.

The annual meeting shall be held at such time and place as may be determined by the executive board, notice being given to each branch league not less than ten days before such meeting.

SEC. 2. The executive board may call, in like manner, special meetings of the league.

SEC. 3. The executive board shall meet as often as necessary, at the call of the president of said board.

ARTICLE VI.

These by-laws may be amended at any annual meeting by a majority vote of those present, provided that a notice of the amendment proposed be sent to each branch league with the call for the meeting.

CONSTITUTION (BRANCH CHURCH LEAGUES).

ARTICLE I.

The name of this organization shall be the.....
 Branch of the Colored Anti-Tuberculosis League of.....
 [Name of church.]
 [Name of State.]

ARTICLE II.

Its object is to combat tuberculosis—

By dissemination of information in regard to the disease, the measures necessary to prevent its spread, and the best methods for the care and treatment of persons having the disease.

By improving the sanitary conditions under which our people live, and teaching the essential principles of general sanitation.

By giving practical assistance and encouragement to those suffering from tuberculosis in order that they may derive the greatest benefit from treatment, and to prevent spreading the disease.

By having simple lessons in sanitation taught in the schools and Sunday schools for colored children.

By the establishment of dispensaries and sanatoria where colored people may obtain advice and treatment for consumption and other diseases.

By cooperating with the public health authorities and other organizations in measures adopted for the prevention and cure of consumption.

ARTICLE III.

Meetings shall be held as directed by the by-laws.

BY-LAWS (BRANCH CHURCH LEAGUES).

ARTICLE 1.

Any colored person paying into the treasury of this league the sum of \$1 will be enrolled as an active member for twelve months from the date of said payment.

Any colored person paying into the treasury of this league the sum of \$25 will be enrolled as a life member.

ARTICLE 2.

Each member upon the payment of the required dues shall be given a certificate of membership stating the period for which dues have been paid.

ARTICLE 3.

Each member of this league in good standing shall be entitled to wear a button bearing the words "Colored Anti-Tuberculosis League" with the double red cross.

ARTICLE 4.

The officers of this league shall be as follows: President, vice-president, secretary, treasurer, who shall perform the usual duties of their respective offices.

SEC. 2. There shall be an executive board consisting of the president and secretary, ex officio, and three other members.

SEC. 3. The executive board shall appoint all committees and administer all of the affairs of the league, making a report to the league at the annual meeting.

ARTICLE 5.

The officers, including the members of the executive board, shall be elected at the annual meeting to serve for one year, or until their successors are elected.

ARTICLE 6.

The following standing committees shall be appointed by the executive board to serve for one year: (a) Finance, (b) information, (c) sick, (d) sanitation, and such other temporary committees as may be necessary to carry on the work of the league.

ARTICLE 7.

The committee on finance shall audit the books of the treasurer once each month. No money shall be paid out of the treasury of the league except upon the order signed by each member of the finance committee, and such orders shall be held by the treasurer as subvouchers for his authority for making the expenditure.

The committee on information shall collect all practical information and disseminate it among members of the league on the cause and prevention of tuberculosis and other diseases, and such general sanitary information as may seem necessary to improve the health conditions of its members.

The committee on the sick shall visit any member who is reported to be sick and will ascertain if the said member is suffering from tuberculosis, evidence of which shall be a certificate from a reputable physician that the said member has, or probably has, tuberculosis.

When a member is found to be suffering from tuberculosis, all the facts, with the certificate of the physician, shall be reported to the executive board, with a statement of the needs of the member, and with the recommendation of the committee as to the kind of relief to be given by the league.

The committee on sanitation shall inform themselves regarding matters of sanitation, and especially the health laws of their respective communities, and endeavor to induce the members of the league to correct any violations of the said health laws, and the best sanitary practices. This committee shall especially urge the necessity for keeping open the windows of sleeping rooms and the admission of fresh air and sunlight, the avoidance of overcrowding, and especially try to stop the practice of sleeping with the head under the bed covering.

ARTICLE 8.

When it is known that a member has tuberculosis as provided in Article 7, and the facts are reported to the executive board, the said board will consider all the facts of the case and decide what assistance shall be given the said member.

ARTICLE 9.

The times and meetings of the league will be determined by the executive board. A notice of said meeting shall be given each member at least 5 days before the said meeting. It is provided that the annual meeting shall be held in the month of ——— for the election of officers, and other business, and that notices of such annual meeting shall be given each member at least 10 days before said meeting.

ARTICLE 10.

These by-laws may be amended at any regular meeting of the league, provided that a notice of the proposed amendment be sent out with the call for the meeting. A majority vote is required to adopt an amendment.

PROPOSED CERTIFICATE OF MEMBERSHIP.

COLORED ANTI-TUBERCULOSIS LEAGUE

OF

.....
(Name of State.)

.....
(Name of the church branch league.)

This certifies that..... is a member in good standing of this League, and has paid all dues for one year from....., 19....

[SEAL.]

.....
President.

.....
Secretary.

Tuberculosis, or "Consumption," is caused by a germ too small to be seen by the naked eye. It is not an inherited, but a "catching" disease.

You can take it whether any member of your family ever had it or not.

It is spread chiefly by means of the discharges from the nose and throat of consumptives.

The germ is found in dust and elsewhere.

It gets into the lungs and causes consumption.

The germ destroys a part of the lungs, which is coughed up and spit out.

The spit of a consumptive contains many of these germs; therefore it is poisonous.

If the spit is destroyed by burning, the germs are killed.

Do not spit on sidewalks, floors, or walls. Catch the spit in a bottle or something else and burn it.

How to keep from taking consumption.

Live right. Go to bed early.

How to keep from taking consumption—Continued.

Do not dissipate.

Do not drink liquors.

Leave the windows of your sleeping room open at night, no matter how cold it is.

Keep warm by having enough bed clothes.

DO NOT SLEEP WITH YOUR HEAD UNDER THE BED COVERS.

Keep your feet dry. If they get wet change your shoes and stockings.

It is better to go barefoot than to wear wet shoes and stockings.

If you have a cough, or are losing in weight, go to a doctor.

Do not sleep in a room with many other people.

Do not sleep with a consumptive.

Strong and healthy people are less liable to take consumption than the weak and sickly.

If you have consumption—

Catch all your spit and burn it.

Hold a piece of paper before your face when you cough or sneeze, and burn it.

If you have consumption—Continued.

Live out of doors as much as possible.

Sleep out of doors, or in a tent or shed.

If you must sleep in a house, open all the windows at night.

Air the room frequently in the day.

Sleep alone. DO NOT SLEEP WITH YOUR HEAD UNDER THE BED COVERS.

Eat the best food you can get and a great deal of it. Milk, eggs, fats, and beef are best.

DO NOT TAKE "PATENT MEDICINES" or LIQUORS.

Have your own knife, fork, plate, cup, spoon, glass, towel, etc. Do not wash them with the others. Keep them separate.

Do not try to treat yourself. Go to a good doctor and do just as he tells you.

Do not give up. Consumption can be cured if the patient is not too far gone.

If you have consumption—Continued.

Keep your house clean.

Keep your body clean. Be clean and decent in your habits.

Let fresh air and sunlight into your rooms.

Do not live in dark and damp rooms.

Consumption taken early can be cured. If you think you may have it report the fact to your committee at once, and go to a doctor or a dispensary.

Observe all the health laws of your city, and report any violations of them and all insanitary conditions to the health officer.

Keep flies out of your house and off your food. They carry diseases.

Do not raise dust when sweeping.

Remove dust from furniture, etc., with a damp cloth.

Teach others these things and help to stop the spread of consumption.